

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, MT, US
SUBJECT: SECOND EDITORIAL ON MALTESE/US RELATIONS

REF: VALLETTA 0114

1. IN RESPONSE TO THE EDITORIAL IN THE MALTA NEWS
REPORTED IN REFTEL, THE JANUARY 27 ISSUE OF THE
CONSERVATIVE, PRO-WESTERN TIMES OF MALTA FEATURED
ITS OWN COMMENTS ON MALTESE/US RELATIONS. THE TIMES
EMPHASIZED THAT, IF MALTESE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED
STATES HAVE NOT BEEN PARTICULARLY CLOSE IN RECENT YEARS,
THE MAIN FAULT LAY WITH THE POLICIES OF MINTOFF'S
"SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT".

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: THE FULL TEXT OF THE JANUARY 27
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EDITORIAL IN THE TIMES OF MALTA WAS AS FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT: MALTA-US RELATIONS
"THE START OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS BEING HAILED
BY LOCAL SOCIALISTS AS THE BEGINNING OF A CHANGE IN THE
MALTESE SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED
STATES; A CHANGE TOWARDS IMPROVING THOSE RELATIONS.

"THE CHANGE IN APPROACH MAY BE LOOKED AT AS AN ADMISSION THAT RELATIONS WERE NOT WHAT THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN THROUGHOUT THE PREVIOUS FIVE YEARS. ANY CHANGE AIMED AT IMPROVING THOSE RELATIONS IS WELCOMED IN VIEW OF THE APPROACH OF 1979 AND THE TIME, BY THE END OF MARCH OF THAT YEAR, TO ESTABLISH DEFENSE AND FOREIGN RELATIONS WITHOUT THE EQUIVOCATION OF PAST YEARS.

"THE CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION IN THE UNITED STATES CANNOT FUNDAMENTALLY ALTER AMERICAN WORLD POLICY. THE UNITED STATES IS THE LEADING MEMBER OF THE FREE WORLD AND THIS IS BASICALLY AT THE CORE OF AMERICAN POLICY. IT IS ALSO A FACT OF LIFE RECOGNIZED BY FREE COUNTRIES ELSEWHERE WHO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT INTERDEPENDENCE IS THE ONLY PATH TO BE FOLLOWED IN SAFETY.

"THIS WAS MADE CLEAR ON THE DAY OF MR. CARTER'S SWEARING-IN AS THE 39TH PRESIDENT WHEN HE SAID: 'WASHINGTON CAN NEVER BE INDIFFERENT TO THE FATE OF FREEDOM ELSEWHERE. OUR MORAL SENSE DICTATES A CLEAR-CUT PREFERENCE FOR THOSE SOCIETIES WHICH SHARE WITH US AN ABIDING RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUAL HUMAN RIGHTS.'

"THAT HAS BEEN, AND WILL REMAIN, THE MAIN PREFERENCE IN THE PURSUIT OF AMERICAN AIMS IN THE WORLD AND IN PROMOTING OR IMPROVING RELATIONS, WHERE THESE HAVE NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY CULTIVATED. A DEGREE OF RECIPROCITY IN SHARING COMMON AIMS WITH THE UNITED STATES IS THE LEAST THE AMERICANS HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPECT. THE AMERICAN VIEW OF THE FREE WORLD IS BASED ON THE GREAT DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLE FOR WHICH THE USA UNDOUBTEDLY STANDS. THOSE VIEWS DESERVE TO BE SHARED AND SUPPORTED BY ALL MEMBERS OF THE FREE WORLD. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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"IN THE PAST YEAR, 1976, MALTA WAS AMONG SOME 37 COUNTRIES NOT PROPOSED FOR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FROM AMERICA. A REQUEST IS AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION FOR AMERICAN AID WHICH IS REGARDED AS ONE OF COLLABORATION BEGINNING WITH AN APPROACH BY COUNTRIES REQUIRING AID.

"THE ABSENCE OF MALTA IN THE LIST OF COUNTRIES PROPOSED FOR AMERICAN AID WAS AN INDICATION OF A BREAK IN THE PROCESS OF FOLLOWING-UP REQUESTS FOR AMERICAN ASSISTANCE. THE PROCESS BEGAN IN THE SPRING OF 1972, WHEN A US GOVERNMENT MISSION VISITED MALTA 'TO REPORT ON THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SITUATION' OF THESE ISLANDS AND 'TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES REGARDING THE BEST SECTORS WHERE AMERICAN SUPPORT CAN BE GIVEN TO MALTA IN THE MOST CONSTRUCTIVE FORM.'

"THAT MISSION MUST HAVE REPORTED ITS FINDINGS TO BOTH GOVERNMENTS SINCE THEN AND BOTH GOVERNMENTS MUST BE FULLY AWARE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE AND THE REACTION TO OR LACK OF INTEREST SHOWN IN THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS BY WHICHEVER SIDE.

"WHEN IT COMES TO AMERICAN INVESTMENT, IT MUST OF COURSE BE UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS DEPENDS MAINLY ON PRIVATE INVESTMENT. THE PRIVATE INVESTOR MUST BE MADE AWARE OF PROSPECTS OF SECURITY FOR HIS INVESTMENT AND LOOKS FOR FRIENDLY RELATIONS. SUCH RELATIONS MAY NOT HAVE BEEN PROJECTED IN ANYTHING LIKE THE NECESSARY DEGREE BY WHAT THE AVERAGE AMERICAN MAY HAVE HEARD ABOUT LOCAL POLICIES PURSUED IN INTERNAL AND IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

"THE MALTESE SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY SHOWN TO BE SIDING WITH THOSE WHO ARE LUKEWARM, IF NOT HOSTILE, TO THE UNITED STATES ROLE IN THE WORLD. IT IS UP TO THE MALTESE GOVERNMENT TO SHOW CLEARLY THAT ITS OWN ROLE IS IN LINE WITH A ROLE WHICH, AS MR. CARTER HAS JUST REPEATED, MUST REFLECT PREFERENCE FOR THOSE WHO PURSUE COMMON AIMS OF INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM." END TEXT
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3. COMMENT: THE FUTURE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MALTA AND THE UNITED STATES IS RAPIDLY BECOMING THE MOST POPULAR TOPIC OF CONVERSATION ON THE ISLAND. IT IS INCREASINGLY OBVIOUS THAT ALL SEGMENTS OF THE MALTESE PUBLIC HOPE (INDEED, EVEN EXPECT) THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WILL LOOK WITH FAVOR UPON THEIR COUNTRY AND ITS ECONOMIC NEEDS. BUT AT LEAST THE TIMES RECOGNIZES THAT A MORE POSITIVE APPROACH BY MINTOFF TOWARD THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE A USEFUL, PERHAPS EVEN AN ESSENTIAL, COROLLARY TO ANY HOPE FOR FUTURE AMERICAN ASSISTANCE TO MALTA. END COMMENT.
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